

A STUDY OF THE CO-ED PROGRAM OF THE Y-TEEN DEPARTMENT

OF THE HARLEM BRANCH

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Significance of Study

Co-ed programs in Young Women's Christian Associations have recently, within the last five years, received new emphasis. The literature of the Young Women's Christian Associations of America shows a growing concern to clarify the role which co-ed activities should play in YWCA program. The following statement illustrates the focus of the Young Women's Christian Association of New York City:

The YWCA is organized primarily to meet the needs of women and girls. Young men and boys are included in some activities and programs in order to provide a rounded life for the Association membership. The YWCA does not contemplate setting up program activities for men and boys alone.<sup>1</sup>

Co-ed activities increased during the war years.<sup>2</sup> The organization and increased activity of "teen-canteens" and similar groups throughout the nation, especially from 1941 through 1945, accounts for much of the increased participation of boys in YWCA activities. In many instances YWCA's were the sole sponsors of such activities.

... until the war years youngsters did not come to YWCA's or other agencies in such large numbers.... Boys have continued to predominate in most canteens, and this fact has caused many YWCA's to question the relation of these programs

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<sup>1</sup>"Some General Information About Policies and Practices of the Young Women's Christian Association of the City of New York" (New York, 1947), p. 5 (Mimeographed.)

<sup>2</sup>"Teen-Age Canteens in the YWCA" (New York, 1945), p. 2 (Mimeographed.)

to their vested interest in the affairs of women and girls, even on an experimental or incubation basis.<sup>1</sup>

Although the war-emergency impetus is no longer present, many canteens continue to operate, serving teen-agers whom no other kind of program attracts.

The problem of increased male participation in the Y-Teen Department program, where the primary interest, after all, is in meeting the needs and interests of women and girls, points up the need, as never before, for careful teen-age program planning. The significance of this problem may also be seen in a statement from the Workbook of the Seventeenth National Convention of the YWCAs of America in which it is stressed that co-ed activities must be planned "so as to safeguard the important values of a bisexual society, and at the same time insure the continued opportunity of women and girls to develop leadership and participation skills by themselves."<sup>2</sup>

#### Purpose of Study

Numerous studies and reports on the organization and program of such canteens were made during the war years, and there are some such studies and reports available now. However, there has not been any study or collection of data on the extent and nature of such co-ed groups in the YWCAs today. Such a research job will be undertaken soon by the Department of Data and Trends of the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hazel Osborn, Teen Canteens, Some Special Problems (New York, 1947), pp. 6-9.

<sup>2</sup>Workbook, Seventeenth National Convention of the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States of America (New York, 1946), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Elise F. Moller, National Board, Young Women's Christian Associations, New York, February 2, 1948.

However, in view of this concern with regard to increased male participation in YWCA programs, the relation of co-ed canteens and clubs to the total YWCA, and the need for study especially on the program level, it would seem that a study of the experience in this area of one YWCA might be of value.

This study of the co-ed program of the Harlem Branch YWCA seeks to discover some of the factors involved in a co-ed program and the setting up of a co-ed club on the teen-age level. This will be attempted through description and analysis of the structural organization, the membership characteristics, and specific program emphases.

#### Scope of Study

The co-ed program of the Y-Teen Department was centered in the Co-ed Club, which was organized in October, 1947. This study will concern itself primarily with the organization and activities of the club during the period October, 1947, through January, 1948.

#### Method of Procedure

Material and data used in the study are from the statistical, narrative and agency-form records. Description, analysis and interpretation of these will be in the light of several months of participatory observation. Interviews with the staffs of the Branch and of the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations were conducted, and literature pertinent to the subject was examined.

## CHAPTER II

### PRACTICES AND POLICIES

#### The Young Women's Christian Associations

"The Young Women's Christian Associations are ... an international woman's Christian movement."<sup>1</sup> On the national level there is the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States of America, which is the federated body of the local associations. Local associations may include Branches or Centers geographically located to serve women and girls in a particular community.

The purpose of the YWCA is basically to promote the development of women and girls as individuals and as individuals in groups through the fellowship which membership in the local associations affords. The formal purpose is stated as follows:

To build a fellowship of women and girls devoted to the task of realizing in our common life those ideals of personal and social living to which we are committed by our faith as Christians. In this endeavor we seek to understand Jesus, to share his love for all people, and to grow in the knowledge and love of God.<sup>2</sup>

The principle implied in this purpose is that women and girls of varying interests, of different economic, racial and social backgrounds, and of different ages, can work together for a common purpose.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Workbook, Seventeenth National Convention of YWCAs, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 75.



### Philosophy and Policies Underlying Teen-Age Program

The age range of the "Younger Girls" group is from twelve through eighteen years. From twelve to thirty-five years has been endorsed as the age range of the constituency of the YWCA.<sup>1</sup>

There are certain basic factors which make for unity of purpose in the teen-age programs of the various associations. These are: "(1) its national and international scope, (2) its recognition of youth-adult team work, (3) its Christian purpose, and (4) its democratic method."<sup>2</sup>

The type of activity in teen-age departments is extremely varied. There are Y-Teen clubs with an all-girl membership, canteens, co-ed clubs, interest and hobby groups, camps, conferences and inter-club groups and activities.<sup>3</sup>

### Harlem Branch YWCA

The Harlem Branch YWCA is one of the five activity centers of the YWCA of New York City. Located in the heart of Harlem, it serves predominantly Negroes, though other racial or nationality groups may participate in the activities.

In 1946 the Branch had an investment in property of approximately \$1,000,000, a budget of \$354,613.00 and more than 125 workers. Membership numbered approximately 6,000.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Elise F. Moller (ed.), "Pointers on Policy," The Bookshelf, XXXI (November-December, 1947), 9.

<sup>2</sup>Elise F. Moller (ed.), "Pointers on Policy," The Bookshelf, XXXI (September-October, 1947), 9.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>"The Story of the Harlem Branch YWCA," (Special Report, Annual Meeting, 1946).

Services were offered through the Branch in the general areas of residence, employment, education through the Trade School, physical education, and program activities. The Activities Department, in turn, had three major divisions. These were the Adult Activities Department, the Co-ed Activities Department (for young adults), and the Y-Teen Department. Each of the departments had a director, and there was a director of the Activities Department.

#### Y-Teen Department

All activity for teen-agers on the program level was centered in the Y-Teen Department with the exception of physical education. The department served girls between the ages of twelve and eighteen. Program in this department was mainly through club activities. There was one club for junior high-school-age girls, three clubs for senior high-school-age girls, a co-ed dance program, and a Teen Council. The Co-ed Club, which was organized in October, 1947, was the most recent type of activity included in the department program.

## CHAPTER III

### DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE CO-ED CLUB

#### Co-ed Activities

"Co-ed activities are a normal part of the Younger Girls' program in the Y.W.C.A."<sup>1</sup> In the Y-Teen Department of the Harlem Branch YWCA, co-ed activities were carried on in the form of club parties and dances, discussion groups, and special activities such as a "charm school." The charm school, conducted in April and May of 1947, included phases on boy-girl relations, parent-child relations, physical hygiene and grooming, and sex education.

During the war period teen-agers of the department were greatly interested in activities which might imitate in some way the war recreation program for service men and civilians. A recreation program for service men was carried on by the Adult Activities Department of the Branch, and a similar group for teen-agers developed. This group was the Drop-in-Lounge.

The Drop-in-Lounge was a recreational group designed for the purpose of meeting the need of girls in the club groups of the department to enjoy wholesome co-ed relations. These activities, for the most part, were dances sponsored by the Teen Council. Individual clubs took turns in planning theme, program and entertainment for the dances, which were held biweekly, on Friday nights, from 8:30 to 11:30 p.m., in the downstairs club room. Girls had to be members of the YWCA in order to participate. Boys were originally invited from guest lists brought in by the girls of the various

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<sup>1</sup>Teen-Age Centers in the YWCA National Board YWCA, (New York, 1945), p. 3.

clubs. Later each boy received a membership card, at the first dance activity which he attended, and was asked to present this at subsequent occasions.

Admission to these dances was ten cents.

Several factors might be cited in regard to an evaluation of this mass activity. Membership increased steadily. The group outgrew the space provided for them. The group became self-supporting financially, and, while little indigenous leadership developed, group consciousness evolved to help in the direction of formulating a satisfactory co-ed program for the fall of 1947.

This redirection of co-ed program, which was facilitated by staff leadership, came as a result of the expressed desire of teen-age girls of the department to have a co-ed club.<sup>1</sup> This offered a chance for boys to participate in the planning of special events and activities of the Drop-in-Lounge. It was also recognized that many of the teen-agers participating in the mass activity were ready for and capable of successful participation in smaller interest or planning groups. Especially benefited by this mass activity were those teen-agers to whom such occasions constituted the principal attraction of the YWCA program.

It was also felt that activities could be expanded in a co-ed club to include a wider range of interest other than predominantly dance activities.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Rena C. Pendergrass, Y-Teen Department, Harlem Branch YWCA, New York, October 8, 1947.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Doris M. DuBissette, Activities Department, Harlem Branch YWCA, New York, November 15, 1947.

### The Co-ed Club

Purpose and Objectives.-The purpose of the co-ed club was that of promoting further areas for creative expression, for development of skills, and for educational and recreational participation of teen-agers in mixed groups.

The objectives were twofold: first, to provide for self-expression through dramatics, dancing and other interests that might later evolve from the group, and secondly, to contribute to the planning and execution of program and entertainment involved in the Drop-in-Lounge. The group would plan dramatic or dance events not only for the benefit of the participants but also for presentation during Drop-in-Lounge dances or for mass participation during dances. Thus, "the Co-ed Club could offer a chance for boys and girls to be helped in serving as Master of Ceremonies or could work on simple skits and dance routines."<sup>1</sup>

Development of Structural Organization.-As a result of staff consultation, it was decided to set up the club on a kind of workshop basis with adult leadership being provided in dramatics and dancing. Six members of the various girls' clubs responded to an invitation from the staff to come, on October 6, 1947, to make suggestions for starting the club. The group was given a general idea of the purpose of the club and the possible kinds of activities that might be held. The group continued from this point to plan publicity for recruiting club members and suggested a special project for the Drop-in-Lounge. Subsequent meetings resulted in thirty-three boys and girls enrolling for membership. The project of planning a Halloween

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<sup>1</sup>Record of the Co-ed Club, Y-Teen Department, Harlem Branch YWCA, New York, October 6, 1947.

party was divided into three units: (1) the dance unit, which worked on a presentation for that night, (2) the dramatic unit, which also worked toward this end, and (3) an entertainment unit, which was to plan invitations, decorations, and refreshments for the dance.

These three units, dance, dramatics, and entertainment, formed the basic structure within which the group operated. The latter unit was changed to a music unit in February, 1948, for interest of the group was in this direction.

No officers of the club were elected during the first three months of its organization. During this time each unit had a voluntary recorder who reported activities of the unit to the group meetings of the entire club.

As the club progressed toward group cohesiveness they were guided in the election of a group of club officers. The officers also acted as a council for the club and selected three representatives to serve on the Teen Council.<sup>1</sup>

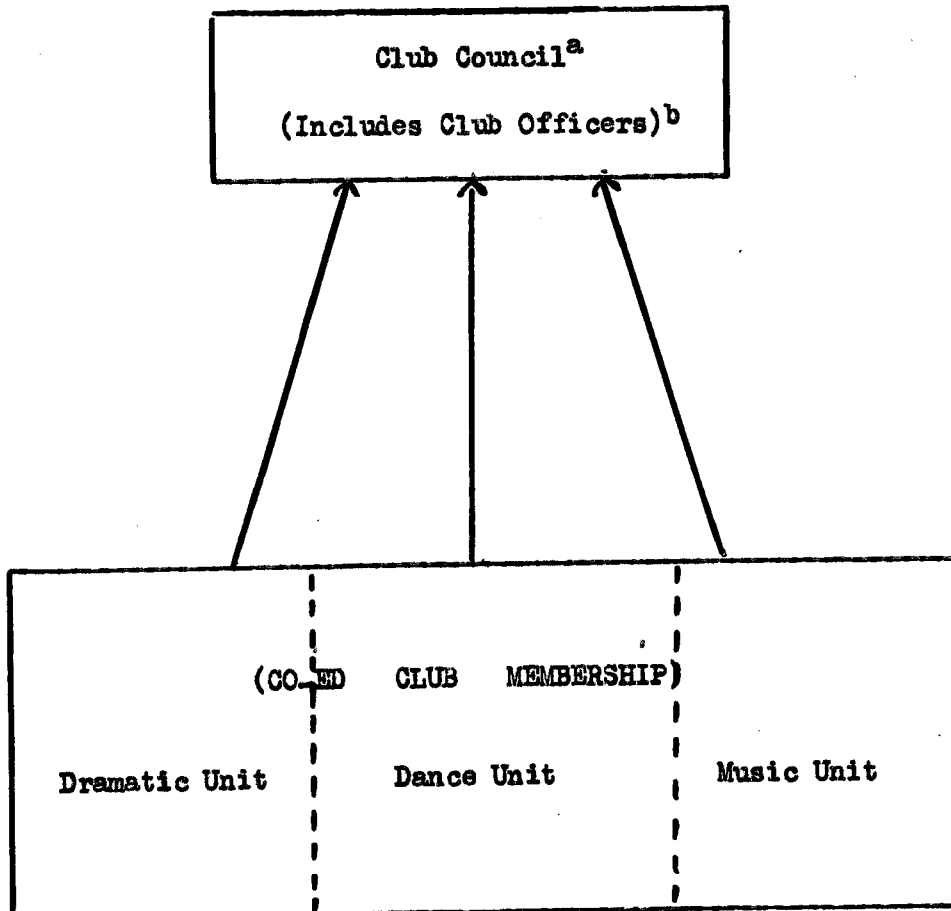
Adult Leadership.—Each unit had a paid leader or specialist to guide its activities. The staff worker from the Y-Teen Department had responsibility for supervision of these leaders, working with the Club Council, and, in general, coordinating the program of the entire club.

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<sup>1</sup>See Chart 1, p. 11.

## CHART 1

THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CO-ED CLUB OF THE Y-TEEN  
DEPARTMENT OF THE HARLEM BRANCH YWCA, FEBRUARY 2, 1948



<sup>a</sup>Includes three members who serve as representatives to the Teen Council and a recorder from each of the three units.

<sup>b</sup>Club officers are president, vice-president, secretary, assistant secretary, and treasurer.

## CHAPTER IV

### CLUB MEMBERSHIP

#### Number of Participants

"Composition and size are significant factors in knowing the group.... Groups are different and must be understood in terms of their differences and worked with accordingly."<sup>1</sup>

The actual number of participants in the club was difficult to determine with accuracy. Registration data were available for almost all members attending regularly. A limited amount of data were available on persons attending twice or less, and it was possible that some of the short-term contacts were not recorded in any way.

Several reasons may be adduced to explain participation without registration. One factor was in the nature of the registration process. In the first month of the club's activity, all registration of new members was done by one worker, usually at the beginning of the club meeting. This practice resulted in a situation wherein new participants, those coming in after members had dispersed to the three units, voluntarily or through invitation from a friend club member, went directly to a unit activity. Since the group activity, such as a dance or dramatic rehearsal was in progress, inclusion, if possible, of the late-comer did not necessarily include registration. Thus, some participants in unit activities did not register. This problem was aggravated because of use of separate quarters for unit meetings: the general club meeting was held in the auditorium, and the

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<sup>1</sup>Harleigh B. Trecker, Group Process in Administration (New York, 1946), pp. 34-35.



units met in either the game room, club room or auditorium. Central registration in this case was difficult to carry out.

Another factor possibly contributing to large participation without registration was that there was no incentive to register, such as receiving a membership card or paying a fee. In its early stages the club did not exist as a club but as a group of assembled individuals.

The number of participants who filled out registration forms, either partially or fully, for membership in the Co-ed Club during the period of this study, included 124 boys and girls. Forty-five per cent of this figure or fifty-six were those who had only one or two contacts with the club. There were thirty-one boys and twenty-four girls in this group.<sup>1</sup>

Several interpretations might be given for this large number of short term contacts. The novel aspect of a new club attracted boys and girls who were attending the Drop-in-Lounge and who possibly came because of curiosity. Attendance at one or two meetings only might indicate lack of sustained interest because the program did not sufficiently meet their needs. An example of this is a boys' gang who attended Drop-in-Lounge, which was a mass activity, and made what seemingly was a good adjustment there, but who did not find comparable satisfaction or interest possibilities in the Co-ed Club meeting to warrant their continued participation:

A boys' gang of five members came to Co-ed Club meeting, responding to an invitation from a clique of five girls of ten that made up the entertainment unit. The entire club had met earlier and made general plans and suggestions for initiation of their second project, which was centered around a Pueblo In-

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<sup>1</sup>Data taken from Co-ed Club Registration and Attendance Records, October 6, 1947 - January 29, 1948.

dian Corn Dance Festival. The boys' gang arrived at the height of the discussion and planning by the entertainment unit. One of the members of the group attempted to tell them of the plans being made. However, the boys would have no part of this. They were destructive of materials on the table, showed resentment toward the kind of activity being planned, and yelled and tugged at each other and the other members of the group to the disruption of the meeting. They paid little attention to the leader in her attempts to find out what they were interested in doing. Finally, one gang member said he was interested in photography, which was immediately echoed by the others. When it was explained that there were few, if any, facilities for such activities in the building, but that possibilities could be explored, the gang members continued with what might have been fantasy-like and wishful accounts of camera equipment which they owned. The regular group members expressed a desire to continue with their planning. Because of continued anti-social and destructive behavior on the part of the gang members, the leader explained that they were welcomed to participate, but that it was hardly possible for the group to function under conditions of their present behavior. Although planning continued, the gang members took a minimum part in it. Only one member returned to a second meeting.<sup>1</sup>

The number of available staff and volunteers for leadership might have indirectly influenced a number of short-term contacts. Unit groups were large in terms of leader-group ratio, especially in the beginning meetings. An example was the dance unit of the club, which had twenty participants in the second meeting of the club with one volunteer leader.<sup>2</sup> Thus, possibilities for interaction between individual members and the leader were lessened rather than heightened.

Another factor is indicated in the fact that, of the twenty-four girls classified as venturing no more than one or two contacts with the club activity in question, nine belonged to all-girl clubs in the department.

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<sup>1</sup>Observation, Co-ed Club Meeting, November 3, 1947.

<sup>2</sup>Co-ed Club Attendance Record, October 20, 1947.

Some of these persons expressed a preference for remaining with the all-girl club, since they were able to attend only one activity during the week.

TABLE 1  
CLASSIFICATION OF SIXTY-NINE CO-ED CLUB  
MEMBERS BY AGE AND SEX\*

Age	Male	Female	Totals
14	0	4	4
15	0	6	6
16	1	18	19
17	5	11	16
18	5	9	14
19	4	0	4
20	2	0	2
Unknown	0	4	4
Totals	17	52	69

\*Those attending at least three meetings.

#### Age Characteristics

An analysis of the boys and girls attending the Co-ed Club for at least three meetings (see Table 1 above) shows that there were fifty-two girls and seventeen boys, making a total of sixty-nine. Hence, the female membership is seventy-five per cent of the total membership, or numbers three girls to every one boy in the club. The age range for boys was from fourteen through twenty years, and the known age range for the girls was from fourteen through eighteen years. The median age for boys was

eighteen years, and the median age for the girls was sixteen years.

Boys and girls who were eighteen through twenty years of age made up thirty-four per cent of the club membership. This approximates the percentage of turn-over in the Department membership. Steps should be taken, it would seem, to help members in the period of transition from the Y-Teen Department to the Young Adult Department with a minimum loss of their number and time for the transition to effectively take place.

#### Educational Status

Knowledge of the educational status of the club members afforded understanding of the composition of the group and helped to point out possible program needs upon which to build. Table 2 on page 19 shows the classification of Co-ed Club members according to educational status. In combining the first two classifications, we find that fifty-six or eighty-one per cent of the club members attended high school or trade school. The six members of the club who worked and the three college students made up the next largest groups.

This would seem to suggest that planning for this group would entail knowledge and understanding of the recreational and extra-curricular programs of the schools in the community attended by these boys and girls, in order to supplement programs where it is needed.

In recognizing the normal interest of adolescents in vocational guidance, the presence of the working group of boys and girls, though small, would seem to indicate the desirability of providing for occupational discussion in the program.

Of the six working boys and girls in the club, one boy and the two girls were very strong indigenous leaders.

E. R. was a nineteen year old boy who had an interest in the operation of a newsstand. He was one of the few members who worked with all three of the different units at one time or another. He had good leadership ability and enjoyed high status in terms of group acceptance and leadership as shown by his election to the vice-presidency of the club.

E. C. and E. E. were clerical workers. They were eighteen and seventeen years of age respectively. E. E. had been forced to discontinue school to help supplement the family income. Both girls were well accepted by the group. E. C. often took responsibility for initiation of the activities of the dance unit, especially when the paid specialist was not present.<sup>1</sup>

These examples also illustrate the need for program to meet the social needs of older boys and girls who have developed most in community consciousness and responsibility. They point specifically to the need for vocational guidance.

The tremendous increase in young workers under eighteen, in urban and farm employment, has meant a double responsibility of YWCA's -- to safeguard them against health hazards and loss of educational equipment for future jobs, and to prepare them for their tasks.<sup>2</sup>

#### Inter-Club Relationships

The relationship of the Co-ed Club to other clubs in the Department and their relation to it may be seen in the structural chart.<sup>3</sup> Members of the all-girl clubs made up the largest number of girls in the Co-ed Club. Of the fifty-two girls in the Co-ed Club, thirty-three were members of one of the three all-girl clubs. The other nineteen girls were members of the

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<sup>1</sup>Taken from Co-ed Club Registration and Narrative Agency-Form Records.

<sup>2</sup>Workbook, Seventeenth National Convention, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>See Chart 2, p. 19.

Co-ed Club only. All girls were required to secure a junior YWCA membership, the cost of which was fifty cents. Members of the Bobby Sox Club for Junior High School girls were not encouraged to become members of the Co-ed Club.

TABLE 2

CLASSIFICATION OF SIXTY-NINE CO-ED CLUB MEMBERS  
ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL STATUS, OCCUPATION AND  
SEX

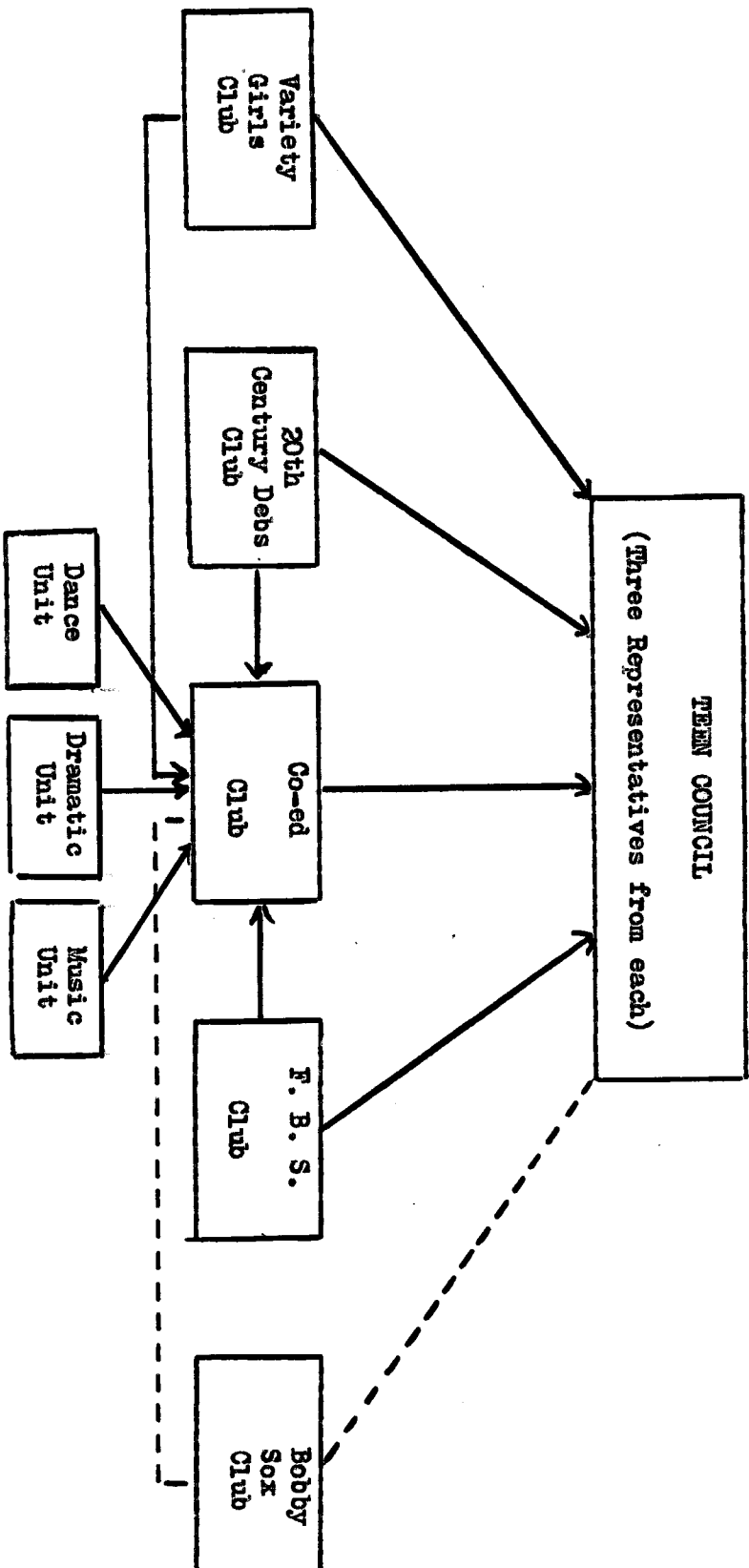
School and Occupation	Male	Female	Totals
School			
High School	7	34	41
Trade School	2	13	15
College*	3	0	3
Junior High School	0	2	2
Occupation			
Working	4	2	6
Unemployed	0	1	1
Unknown	1	0	1
Totals	17	52	69

\*Includes two first year and one second year students.

The Teen Council was the coordinating body for planning and policy making for the three all-girl clubs of the Department as well as for the Co-ed Club. By contrast, some Y-Teen Departments have experimented with joint program planning of the Inter-club Council, or all-girl Council, and the Canteen Council, but have reported this way of work not very

CHART 2

THE STRUCTURAL ORGANIZATION OF THE Y-TEEN DEPARTMENT, HARLEM BRANCH YWCA



Note: Horizontal arrows indicate membership in all-girl clubs and Co-ed Club. Vertical arrows indicate club representatives forming Teen Council. Broken line indicates Junior High School club which does not send representatives to the Teen Council, but which may, in special instances, attend co-ed activities.

successful.<sup>1</sup> Although the Co-ed Club was not intended to be another canteen, it was necessary to do a thorough educational job in respect to this joint planning. The staff of the Department worked closely with the Chairman of the Teen Council in preparation of the agendas, defining the function of the Council and the specific job to be done and ways in which suggestions and ideas could be stimulated among the Teen Council members. Notices of the biweekly meetings of the Council were sent to all of its members with the agenda of the particular meeting included.

The Teen Council was composed of twelve persons, three representatives from each of the four clubs of the Department. Usually the club president, secretary, and one other member-at-large made up this representation. (The Junior High School club, by virtue of its age range - twelve and thirteen years - and the attendant characteristic needs and interests, was not related to the Council through membership participation and planning, but through staff planning and leadership).

The purpose of the Teen Council was to facilitate planning and activities of the component clubs. This was done through two processes. Projects and activities of the club groups were brought to the Council meeting to show what a particular club group had done or was planning to do. In another instance the Council planned over-all program in which all clubs participate. The purpose of the Teen Council as stated by the Council members themselves was as follows:

To exchange information between clubs of the Y-Teen

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<sup>1</sup>Teen-Age Centers in the YWCA, op. cit., p. 10.



Department, to aid the clubs to improve their programs, to cooperate with each other, and (to cooperate) with the Co-ed Club to sponsor the Drop-in-Lounge, to be the voting body of the prom, and to regulate the conduct of the members of the Department.<sup>1</sup>

### Inter-Departmental Relationships

Inter-departmental relationships of the Co-ed Club were similar to those of the all-girl clubs of the Department. It was possible to use the facilities of the Physical Education Department. The club worked more closely with this Department than with others. The club used the gymnasium for dance practices, and special rates were given to Co-ed Club members for special events such as basketball games and special dances held by the Physical Education Department.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes of the Teen Council Meeting, November 26, 1947.

## CHAPTER V

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

#### Recruiting and Training Volunteers

The responsibility for program building and development was vested directly with the Y-Teen Director. A major responsibility in connection with the setting up and operation of the Co-ed Club on an interest basis was the recruiting of specialists in dancing and dramatics. One female specialist was recruited for work with the dance unit, and one male and one female specialist were recruited to work with the dramatic unit. An assistant to the Y-Teen Director served as leader of the work with the club and as the leader of the entertainment unit.

Training of volunteers was provided through short conferences before and after the club meetings, through memorandums from the staff of the department, and in one group meeting of volunteers of the entire Activities Department. The short conferences between staff and volunteers before the club meetings were from five to fifteen minutes long. "Attendance is sporadic for the first half hour. Fortunately it allows time for the group leaders to compare notes for their respective groups."<sup>1</sup> Items were discussed such as division and delegation of responsibilities; the role the leader should play in relation to the group; materials needed and available; special events of the Department that might be called to the attention of the groups; available space for a unit activity in cases

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<sup>1</sup>Record of the Co-ed Club, Y-Teen Department, Harlem Branch Young Women's Christian Association, New York, November 17, 1947.

where use of regular space allowed was not available; and information about the possible general nature of the groups' activities for the evening.

The periods after club meetings were used to discuss the progress of the group meetings in terms of interests discovered and manifested, special problems in relation to the groups' activities such as individual adjustment and development, and future plans and materials needed. These conferences were aided by use of the agency-form records which leaders kept of the respective unit activities.

All three paid leaders working with the Co-ed Club attended the group meeting for all volunteers of the Activities Department. The major items on the agenda of the meeting were the use and preparation of records, and suggestions, and plans for reorganization of the Adult Co-ed Department.

#### Recruiting Club Membership

Girls and boys were recruited for Co-ed Club membership from the all-girl clubs, from the Drop-In-Lounge boys guest list, from irregular members and those listed in the Department's dead file, and from new contacts made at the Information Desk. Publicity consisted of "throw-aways," which were made available at the Information Desk, the Y-Teen Department office, on bulletin boards, and at the Open-House held in October for teen agers. Posters were displayed on bulletin boards and in the game room. Letters and cards were sent to all potential members.

#### Finance

The budget for the Activities Department, which included the Y-Teen Department, provided funds for the operational expenses of the Co-ed Club with one exception. The specialists were paid six dollars per evening for

their services, or three dollars for each of the two hours. This expenditure was met through use of funds accumulating from Drop-In-Lounge dance fees.

### Unit Activities

One of the guiding factors in planning with the leaders and members of the club was to provide an opportunity for planning and working in small groups which would contribute to the democratic process in the Drop-In-Lounge. "... planning by small groups for the large events makes the mass program more democratic."<sup>1</sup> The first project of the Co-ed Club illustrates how the planning in the small group served to increase the number of persons contributing to the planning and action of the Drop-In-Lounge, and how this participation gave increased vitality and added interest to the dance.

In response to exploration a group of six girls suggested that the club plan a masquerade dance for Halloween night. Further discussion and planning at the second meeting of the club resulted in a plan for the dance and dramatic units each to present skits, while the entertainment unit planned original invitations, decorations, music, and refreshments. The dance unit prepared a dance skit in which individuals in the group gave dance interpretations of various Halloween symbols, such as a witch and a scarecrow. The skit presented by the dramatic unit was an original idea, "Halloween Night in an Asylum." Each participant was encouraged to give his own contributions and interpretations as to characterizations.

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<sup>1</sup>Building Program with Groups (New York, [n.d.] ), p. 23.

Of major concern to the club members was their anticipation of lack of cooperation in relation to masquerading. Members decided to make a special effort to stimulate interest of Drop-In-Lounge participants and to convey the fun implied in having a masquerade party. The response was that approximately eighty per cent of the ninety-two boys and girls attending the affair came masqueraded and in costumes.<sup>1</sup>

Activities not necessarily built upon the interest activities were carried on as the members indicated concern about them. After one Drop-In-Lounge dance the following discussion took place:

The last half hour was spent with the amalgamated groups in discussion of family and social problems which sprang out of a spontaneous round table meeting at the November 14th Canteen (Drop-In-Lounge) affair.<sup>2</sup>

An evaluation discussion period after a dance yielded information which indicated that members were concerned about boy-girl relations.<sup>3</sup> Problems were brought to fore such as etiquette at the dance, how to be "popular" with members of the opposite sex, and what to expect on a date.

There were increasing indications of the necessity for further formal organization of the club.

The need for organization of a particular kind is always related to objectives for which the group is working. Organization

<sup>1</sup>Record of the Co-ed Club, Y-Teen Department, Harlem Branch YWCA, New York, November 3, 1947.

<sup>2</sup>Record of the Co-ed Club, Y-Teen Department, Harlem Branch YWCA, New York, November 17, 1947.

<sup>3</sup>Record of the Co-ed Club, Y-Teen Department, Harlem Branch YWCA, New York, November 24, 1947.

is a scheme or pattern of individual and group relationships developed by the group to release and focus individual and group efforts.<sup>1</sup>

In January, the unit groups selected representatives from the various units to act as a Nominating Committee. This committee selected a slate of nominees from which the club elected its officers. Joint responsibility between these officers and staff for planning and for facilitating planning done by the units served to further the effectiveness of the club's membership participation. This can be seen in the increased effective participation of members in the planning of activities as well as in the execution of them.

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<sup>1</sup>Harleigh B. Trecker, Group Process in Administration (New York, 1946), p. 35.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Co-ed activities have been greatly emphasized in YWCA's due to the increase of male participation. Canteens played a large role in this increased male participation. There is need for effective program planning due to this inclusion.

The co-ed program of the Y-Teen Department of the Harlem Branch YWCA was centered during the years 1941-1945 in a mass activity, the Drop-In-Lounge. This was modified in October, 1947 to include interest groups in dancing, dramatics, and music in the form of a Co-ed Club. The change came about as a result of expressed wishes of girls of the department buttressed by staff evaluation of the program.

The membership of the Co-ed Club is roughly sixty-nine girls and boys with the girls forming seventy-five per cent of the membership. The median age for the girls was sixteen years, and the median age for the boys was eighteen years. Thirty-four per cent of the club's members were the older teen agers, or were seventeen and eighteen years of age.

Eighty-one per cent of the club members were in high school. The group that worked made up the next largest group.

The coordinating council for the co-ed activities and the all-girl clubs was a joint activity; representatives from the Co-ed Club were in the same proportion as representatives from the other clubs.

Activities of the Co-ed Club in cooperation with other departments were limited to the use of physical facilities. Club members also received invitations to attend the pay affairs planned by the Physical

Education Department. There were no inter-departmental activities resulting from joint constituency planning.

The development of the club and its members moved with increased intensity as shown by the desire and ability of members to take on more responsibility for the club's planning and activities.

Training of volunteer leaders was done mainly during the short conferences before and after meetings.

The following recommendations are given in view of the data reflected in this study.

1. The joint planning council, consisting of representatives from the all-girl clubs and the Co-ed Club, should have continued close supervision and intensive use of the educational process because of the uniqueness of such a plan. It might be well to let the chairman of this group come from an all-girl club rather than using a male participant, since the Council's major obligation is to the all-girl clubs.
2. Further opportunities should be provided for the training of volunteer leadership. This should be done on a regular basis, giving these leaders a chance to experience belonging to a group within the organization whose aims and objectives they are expected to promote.
3. Plans might be made for helping the older teen-agers progress from one department to another. Joint activities, occasionally, between the Y-Teen and Adult Co-ed Departments would seemingly make for a minimum loss of participants during this transitional period.



4. All club members should be given greater opportunity for experiencing and realizing their relations with the adult members of the organization. One or two teen-agers might participate in special or regular meetings of the Activities Committee, which is indirectly responsible for program development of the Department. The long term objective would be to further the club's feeling of belonging and having a part and relationship in the total Association.

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